

New Park Avenue Transit Area Complete Streets Study Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

March 23, 2016

Attendees:

Robert McCue, West Hartford Police Department
Emily Hultquist, Capitol Region Council of Governments
Kimberly Parsons-Whitaker, CT Main Street Center
Jim Courthouts, Home Design District
Susan Wiley, Elmwood Business Association
Todd Dumais, Town of West Hartford, Project Manager
Duane Martin, Town of West Hartford
Mark Vertucci, Fuss & O'Neill
Matthew Skelly, Fuss & O'Neill

Introductions:

Todd Dumais, Town of West Hartford, Project Manager gave a brief overview of the history and impetus for this planning study in the New Park Avenue corridor area. He noted that the need for planning studies and a review of the zoning was identified for this area by the Town's 2009-19 Plan of Conservation and Development. With the development, construction and operation of the Fastrak stations a review of the infrastructure, land use and zoning in the area is more important than ever. Mr. Dumais noted that approximately 1.5 years ago the Town applied for and was awarded a State of Connecticut OPM grant for TOD planning, the funding source for this study. He then introduced the Town's consultant Fuss & O'Neill (F&O) and thanked the members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for agreeing to participate in this study.

Mark Vertucci and Matt Skelly (F&O) introduced themselves and described the study, the transportation and land use planning approaches to the study; key components of the scope of the study (see PowerPoint presentation *New Park Avenue Transit Area Complete Streets Study* on the Town's website). Mr. Vertucci and Mr. Skelly asked members of the TAC for suggestions on key stakeholders that were not identified in the presentation.

Stakeholder suggestions:

- Young Energetic Solutions (YES) should be listed as a stakeholder
- The portion of the Elmwood Neighborhood which lies to the east of the railroad underpass should be listed as stakeholders
- City of Hartford owns half of the Flatbush Station and is impacted by study
- In terms of breaking stakeholders into groups, it should be noted that big box stores are a different category from small businesses which are both separate from area residents
- Survey of the everyday users of the roadway would be helpful
- Department of Public Works
- Leisure Services

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- Transit users including CT Transit and CT fastrak
- Local business unions
- Area churches
- Any use within a ½ mile or ¼ mile radius from either fastrak station (reference the CRCOG TOD report)
- Advisory Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Skelly asked the TAC for additional comments and/or observations about the study area.

Other Comments:

- Consideration should be made for bus pull-off locations to accommodate bus stops and locations to let other vehicles pass
- Potential crash conflicts arise from vehicles drastically slowing in travel speed in order to turn into the correct driveway, made more difficult by the large number of curb cuts along roadway
- Utilities should be moved underground wherever possible
- A sense of security and safety should be promoted for users of the corridor, especially for pedestrians during the nighttime.
- Review existing lighting on the street and propose improvements, such as LED lighting
- Review potential for crosswalk in the vicinity of the terminus of Trout Brook Trail
- Investigate separated grade street crossing alternatives
- Elmwood vs New Park, where does one end and the other begin? Should New Park Avenue be branded separately from Elmwood?
- Traffic congestion have been observed at the intersection of New Britain Avenue and New Park Avenue
- An effort should be made to identify community assets, such as old brick factory type buildings, and preserve them for future development instead of a demolition and rebuild effort, and the cost of this type of development should be analyzed
- Lengthy queues have been observed at the intersection of Flatbush Street and New Park Avenue especially on the southbound approach; may be a result of the streamlining of the intersection of Prospect Street and New Park Avenue
- The movement from Talcott Street onto Oakwood Avenue and vice versa, commonly used by school buses and public works staff, should be reviewed
- Any traffic implications from the expansion of the Charter Oak School, especially school bus traffic, should be analyzed

Future Meetings:

- First public outreach meeting tentatively scheduled for Wednesday April 20th at the Elmwood Community Center with the next TAC meeting to immediately precede the event.